

Ilan Pasin

this is our way

Torres Strait Art



Education Kit



About The Exhibition

With an identity unique to itself, the culture of the Torres Strait Islanders is relatively unfamiliar to the majority of Australians. Since European settlement non-indigenous Australians have largely subsumed Torres Strait Islanders into the culture of Aboriginal Australia. **Ilan Pasin** is the first major exhibition of Torres Strait Islander art ever seen in Australia and your visit will be one that you and your students will find to be an enriching and rewarding educational experience.

Some things are known by mainstream Australians about the Torres Strait, one being that it is the birthplace of Eddie Mabo who fought and won the first great land rights battle. What is less known is the significance of the place of cultural objects in establishing a tradition and the occupation of land. These objects were originally gathered in 1898 by anthropologists of the Haddon expedition from Cambridge University and now 100 years later one of these holdings has come back on loan from Cambridge to sit beside the artworks of young contemporary Torres Strait Islanders.

The Haddon expedition was the first to use film to document social anthropological findings and stills from these as well as other insights can be viewed on the Cambridge website at <http://cumaa.archanth.com.qc.uk/museum.html> Haddon belonged to a group of scientists who were developing Darwinian biology; their findings helping to depose evolutionary theories about European superiority and scientific racism.

The exhibition is best considered in three sections. The first shows traditional artefacts from the time before European occupation. The second shows works of an 'in-between' period with western influences evident and the third and major part of the exhibition features the vibrant and alive works of contemporary Torres Strait Islander artists. It is important that your students be aware of this curatorial organisation prior to and during their visit.

The exhibition is accompanied by the first major publication to look at Torres Strait Islander art, written mainly by Torres Strait Islanders. This extensive and beautifully presented book features writings on history/legend, language, religion, dance and music as well as providing extensive information on Torres Strait Islander art, both contemporary and from 'the time before'. It will be an invaluable and necessary asset to your school's resource centre as well as to your own professional library.

Using the **Ilan Pasin** exhibition, the book, and this education kit, you as an educator have at your fingertips everything that you need to assist your students to understand the significance to Australia of the contribution of the culture of the people of the Torres Strait. A visit to the exhibition before bringing your students would prove invaluable. This visit and some prior reading of the catalogue by you will greatly enhance the educational value of their visit.

You and your students will find this to be an exhibition that will inspire interest and thought, discussion and artistic endeavour as well as a means to further foster an understanding between peoples. Students of all ages - from the youngest in the lower primary to those studying art majors - will find something in this exhibition. **Ilan Pasin** is much more than just an exhibition of art. In the hands of an inspired teacher it can lead to educational activities in the areas of **history, geography, anthropology, sociology, political studies** and so on as well as in the arts.

In this education kit you will find suggested activities to be undertaken before, during and after the exhibition. Please be aware that these are suggestions only and that their use and interpretation is entirely up to your professional judgement. How you incorporate this visit and associated activities into your program of work is also left to your professional determination. To assist you, starting points, topics for discussion as well as suggestions for the creation of student artworks have been provided.

In part of the exhibition there are a lot of prints.

Some of these are **screenprints** and some are **linocut prints**. Screenprints are made by cutting or making a **stencil**, putting this onto the surface to be printed, putting a fine meshed material (like silk) onto the stencil and forcing special ink through this with a squeegee. The ink goes through the stencil and makes a print. Linocuts are made by cutting the design into special lino (like the stuff on the kitchen floor only different). Ink is then rolled over the lino. When a piece of paper or cloth is placed over the lino it comes away with the print on it.

- **Bill Spooner**
Education Consultant





Pre-visit activities

Use a good quality atlas or map to find the Torres Strait.

- Is the Torres Strait a part of Australia?
- What is the name of the country immediately to the north of the Torres Strait?
- You can see that there are many small islands in the Torres Strait. How many islands are there and what are their names? Can you say their traditional island names as well as their English names?
- Mark on the map where you live in Australia. Calculate how far it is from where you live to Waiben (Thursday Island).

Imagine what it would be like to live amongst a group of tropical islands.

- How would you travel to visit your friends on the other islands?
- Do you imagine that there would be coral reef surrounding some of the islands? What sort of fish would live on these reefs?
- Create some big, bright colourful pictures that are about living on a tropical island. Use large sheets of paper and include the sea creatures, colourful flowers, canoes, boats and people.
- Ask your teacher to find some recordings of Torres Strait Islander music, both traditional and contemporary to play for you.



During the Visit

Ask your teacher to show you the oldest things in the exhibition first and the newest things last.

Start by looking at the warup (drum).

- Can you work out how many years ago this drum was made?
- Look at the decorations. Can you describe the patterns on the drum?
- Can you identify which parts of the drum are made from wood, lime, seeds, feathers and skin?
- How would you hold the drum to play it?

Have a look at the hunting charm (sea turtle head)

- What would a hunting charm do?
- What are all the things that you could possibly imagine that the Torres Strait Islanders would use turtles for?

Look at the other masks in this section.

- What are the other masks made from?
- Masks were worn during ceremonies and dances. Try to imagine what these ceremonies and dances would be like.

The spinning top is made of stone.

- These were made by Torres Strait Islander men and had to be perfectly balanced to spin properly.



Artist unknown Wooden mask
c.1850-1885, acquired 1885 wood, shell inlays,
natural fibres 60 x 24cm Queensland Museum

When you go to an art gallery remember not to touch any of the works on display. Finger marks can do damage. Take your time and look at each work of art carefully.



Have a look at the lugger (dance machine)

- **Luggers were sailing boats used in the pearl and trochus industries. A diver who walked along the seabed behind the boat gathered the shells.**
- **Notice that the keel on this model is shaped into a handle. This was to hold and move about during a dance about pearling luggers. You will see other dance machines in the exhibition.**

In the next section you will see modern Torres Strait Islander art.

Have a look at the woven baskets made by Jenny Mye.

- **What was the woven mat in the previous section and the fans in the first section made from?**
- **Can you explain this?**

Go now and have a look at the other dance headdresses and dance machines. The ones with aeroplanes on them are copies of ones that were made during the Second World War. The whale boat dance machine shows how people used to travel from island to island to visit. Before that, they sailed in outrigger canoes. (See the canoe dance machine) Today they go by aluminium dinghy.

- **Look at the beautiful detail and fine craftsmanship of Edrick Tabuai's Mawa (witch doctor) dance headdress. The feathers are from the cassowary and the emu. Do you know what a cassowary is?**

Go and find the pictures in this part of the exhibition.

- **Many of these have been inspired by the coral sea surrounding the islands of the Torres Strait. See how many images that you can find that come from the sea. Can you see dugong, turtles and fish? What about corals and shells?**
- **Other pictures tell of the legends of the Torres Strait and the brave deeds of the warriors. Find the one that you like the best. Tell your friend why it is your favourite. Is it because of all the detail or does it tell an interesting story?**

While you are waiting for your friends to finish looking at the exhibition have another walk around and find your favourite piece. Write down five reasons why it is your favourite piece.



After The Visit

Think of all the different kinds of masks you could make. You could make masks that look like birds or fish and other animals as well as people. Use thin cardboard for your mask and colour it with paint, felts and other media and decorate with raffia, string, wool and anything that comes to hand. Your resource centre should have some books on mask making.

Email one of the schools in the Torres Strait to ask the students questions about their school and island. You can tell them about the **Ilan Pasin** exhibition as well as about your school and where you live. To get their email address go to Education Queensland's home page <http://www.qed.qld.gov.au/> and navigate your way to the Torres Strait Islands Education District Map. Click on the schools on the map to get their addresses.



Artist unknown *Lugger (Dance machine)*
c.1975, acquired 1976 wood, paint, string,
wire, cotton sails 73.6 x 76.9 x 7.8cm
Queensland Museum



Edrick TABUAI *Mawa (Witch doctor) dance headdress* 1998 wood, paint, bamboo, cane, horse hair, cassowary and emu feathers 184 x 90 x 25cm
Cairns Regional Gallery





Pre-visit activities

The exhibition that you are going to visit is called *Ilan Pasin (this is our way): Torres Strait Art*. Torres Strait Islander culture is unique and completely different to mainland Aboriginal culture. Most Australians do not know this. To make your visit worthwhile, meaningful and fun you will need some pre-knowledge to put things into context for you.

Use a good quality map or atlas to locate the Torres Strait. This is an area of over 35,000 square kilometres of which only 3% is land. The rest is open shallow sea dotted with coral reefs. There are more than one hundred islands and the Torres Strait has been described as the most extensive and ecologically complex continental shelf in the world. Large numbers of dugong, turtles reef fish can be found and these and other marine resources have always been of major importance to the Torres Strait Islanders. They are the 'salt water people'.

- **What can you find out about the dugong? Is this mammal an endangered species?**
You can check out the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's web page at <http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/>
- **Turtles come in from the sea to lay their eggs in the sand on a beach. Find out more about these beautiful, gentle animals that live in the warm waters of Australia's north.**
- **Do you know what beche-der-mer are? What about trochus shells? Buttons were made from trochus shells before plastic was invented.**

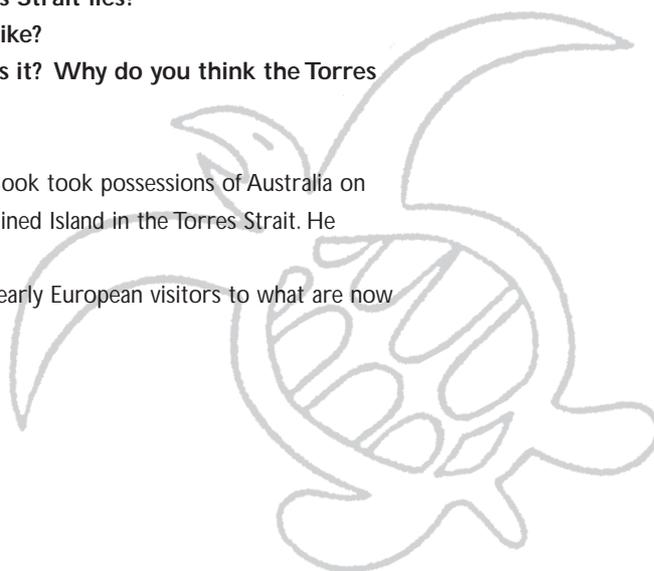
Pearling was once a very important industry in the Torres Strait. A diver walked along the seabed behind a sailing lugger and gathered the shells. People from all over the world were attracted by the lure of pearls, in particular the Japanese. There are many Japanese divers buried on the islands of the Torres Strait. This is a little known story of romance and adventure. A good starting point to find out more about the pearling industry, this time in Broome WA, is <http://library.advanced.org/10236/index.htm>

- **Can you find out at what latitude the Torres Strait lies? What would you expect the climate to be like?**
- **Thursday Island has another name. What is it? Why do you think the Torres Strait Islands have two names?**

Europeans visited the Torres Strait long before Captain Cook took possession of Australia on behalf of the British when he raised the Union Jack on Tuined Island in the Torres Strait. He renamed it Possession Island.

Ask your teacher to tell you the story of some of these early European visitors to what are now Australian shores. Some of them were:

- **The Dutch yacht Duyfken**
- **Luis de Torres**
- **Magellen**
- **Dirk Hartog**
- **William Bligh**
- **HMS Pandora**
- **Captain Cook**





During the visit

The exhibition is in three sections and you should view it section by section. The first section shows traditional works from the time before Europeans (the London Missionary Society in 1871), the second shows an 'in-between period' and the third and main section shows the vibrant and alive works of contemporary (present) Torres Strait Islanders.

Have a look at the dhoeri, dari (dance headdress). This is on loan from the University of Cambridge in England. It was made c.1850-1898. It was collected by the Haddon expedition in 1898, one hundred years ago. Haddon wanted to record information about traditional Torres Strait Islander beliefs and practices.

The warup (drum) is also another early piece. These drums were carved from wood from New Guinea, as suitable trees did not grow in the islands. Imagine the skill required to hollow a log to this shape. Look closely at the intricate painted design.

Have a look at the seated female fibre figure.

- **Can you identify the materials from which this figure was made? (Where is the human hair?)**
- **What effect does viewing this object have on you? Try to describe this effect in a sentence or two.**

The next section in the exhibition holds works that were made from the beginning of this century until the 1980's.

In 1871 the London Missionary Society in a ship called the Surprise (good name?) landed on Erub. This is now called by Torres Strait Islanders the 'Coming of the Light', when the 'light' of Christ was brought into the 'heathen' darkness of the Torres Strait. It is celebrated every year with music, dance performances and traditional feasts. By 1898 when the Haddon expedition arrived they found a Christian culture under the pastoral care of the Bishop of Carpentaria. Haddon believed that the original culture was almost gone and this spurred him to document what was left.

The first thing to see is a series of watercolour paintings.

- **What do you think of the technique used in these pictures?**
- **Which of these paintings do you like the best? Why? Is it the image or the story or is it just the quality of the painting?**
- **Can you say what is happening in each of the pictures?**

The spinning top is made of stone and has an etched design. Simple tops were used by children but this one was used by adults who took competition with these very seriously. It was a form of sport and a good top was a high precision instrument. The record for a continuously spinning top was twenty-seven minutes.

- **What does the design represent?**
- **How do you think that this top was made?**
- **What qualities would it need to be able to spin for a long time?**



Artist unknown Dhoeri, dari (Dance headdress)
c.1850-1898, acquired 1898 feathers, bamboo
framework, string, paint 60 x 39 x 2cm
University of Cambridge, Museum of Archaeology
and Anthropology



Artist unknown Seated female fibre figure
c.1850-1891, acquired 1891 tobacco and coconut
fibre, human hair, wood, paint, bamboo 46 x 61cm
Museum of Victoria



The lugger (dance machine) has its keel shaped into a handle. You are going to see more dance machines in the next section of the exhibition.

- What were luggers used for?
- Do they still exist today?
- What is the handle for?
- Why is it called a dance machine?

Have a look at the other pieces in this section and then move on to the contemporary art section. (What does contemporary mean?) Firstly, go and find the dance machines made by Charles Warusum.

- What do you think of the craftsmanship of this piece?
- Look how the different wood tones compliment each other.
- Those of you with knowledge of boats and a love of sailing would, in particular, appreciate this work.

Go and look at the other dance machines in the exhibition

- Many Torres Strait Islanders were involved in The Second World War (1939-1945) and the fighting came very close with the Japanese being held back from invading Australia in New Guinea and at the Battle of the Coral Sea. This involvement is remembered through the dance machines with the American planes on them.
- Patrick Thaiday has two dance machines which feature stars. One is called 'Comet' and the other is called 'Zugub'. Why do you think stars would be an important motif to Torres Strait Islander people? (A motif is a recurrent element in an artistic or literary work.)
- The one by Ken Thaiday Sr and is called 'Beizam' (hammerhead shark dance machine). What adjectives would you use in describing this extraordinary artwork? Write a paragraph so that when you go home you can share the experience of seeing such an unique object?
- The dhibal (dance headdress) by Edrick Tabuai is a fine, delicate piece featuring white feathers. Look closely at the detail here. This form of headdress has become a symbol of the Torres Strait Islander people. Where do you see this symbol?
- Michael Banu's headdress has a moveable bird. This is the Torres Strait pigeon, a migratory bird that travels between Torres Strait and northern mainland Australia.
- Look at the rest of the dance machines and headdresses. Find the one that most appeals to you. Take your friend with you and explain why you chose this particular piece.

There are other 3 dimensional (3D) works in this section.

- Find the woven pieces. What materials are they woven from? What do you think of the fact that plastic packaging tape is being used in a traditional craft?
- You probably have already looked at Ellen José's 'RIP Terra Nullius'. RIP means "Rest In Peace" and infers that somebody or something is dead. Terra Nullius is Latin and means empty land and refers to the fact that the British said that nobody lived in Australia including the Torres Strait when they annexed it in 1770. This remained as Australian law until 1992 when Eddie Mabo challenged it in the High Court and won. Eddie Mabo said 'my people have been living on my island for thousands of years, so therefore it is my island'.



Michael BANU *Gainau (Pigeon) dance headdress*
1989 painted wood, metal, string 39.8 x 36.2cm
Queensland Museum



Ken THAIDAY Sr *Beizam (Hammerhead shark) dance headdress*
1994 black bamboo, plywood, wire, string, plastic, resin, nails, paint
98 x 110 x 62cm collection of the artist





Jenny MYE Woven basket 1998 plastic packaging tape 30 x 39 x 16.5cm Cairns Regional Gallery

You will see linocut prints and silkscreen prints. Many of the linocuts tell the traditional stories of the Torres Strait from the time before the islands were taken over by the missionaries, the pearlers and the officials of the Queensland government. Have a look at these

- **You will see beautiful, intricate (very involved) designs portraying Torres Strait Island images. There are animals and fish, people and artefacts. Make a list of these. You will need to look into each print very closely as these images are hiding in the design like puzzles. See who can find the most.**
- **What do you think of the carving ability of these artists? Why is carving important in linocut printing?**
- **Now choose the linocut that most appeals to you. Take your friend with you and explain to your friend why this is so.**

Finish looking at the rest of the works in this section, then while you are waiting for your friends to also finish have another look back through the whole show.

- **Choose your favourite piece from each section and write a couple of paragraphs on each to tell why you came to this decision.**
- **Think about how you would explain your visit to this exhibition from the Torres Strait when you go home this afternoon.**

When you go to an art gallery remember not to touch any of the works on display. Finger marks can do damage. Take your time and look at each work of art carefully.



After The Visit

Instead of making a linoprint which requires sharp tools, why not make a potato print? Create a motif inspired by your visit to **Ilan Pasin**, cut a large potato in half, carve or incise your design, ink it up and make a repeat pattern print.

Cambridge University in England has a home page dedicated to the Haddon expedition. You can find this under special exhibitions at <http://wmaa.archanth.cam.ac.uk/museum.html> or simply type 'cambridge university haddon expedition' into Alta Vista.

Email one of the schools in the Torres Strait to ask the students questions about their school and their island. You can tell them about the **Ilan Pasin** exhibition as well as about your school and where you live. To get their email addresses go to Education Queensland's home page <http://www.qed.qld.gov.au/> and navigate your way to the Torres Strait Islands Education District Map. Click on the schools on the map to get their addresses.

http://www.nla.gov.au/1/ms/find_aids/8822.html is a direct link to information on Eddie Mabo. It is located on the web page of the National Library of Australia <http://www.nla.gov.au/>





Before the visit

The exhibition that you are going to see is called ***Ilan Pasin (this is our way): Torres Strait Art***. This is the first major exhibition of Torres Strait Islander art ever seen in Australia and the first to be researched and curated by Torres Strait Islanders. You will see both traditional island artefacts as well as contemporary works by young practising artists.

Most Australians are unaware of the fact that the Torres Strait Islanders are a unique people with a unique cultural tradition. Many confuse this with the indigenous culture of Aboriginal Australia. The Torres Strait is, however, known to many as the birthplace of Eddie Mabo, who fought and won the first great land rights battle for his people.

This exhibition which is touring Australia is an event of worldwide significance. Your visit to the exhibition gives you as a young Australian an opportunity to contribute to a broadening of the understanding between people in this country. In order to avail yourself of this opportunity to contribute and to learn you need to gain some pre-knowledge.

Start by locating the Torres Strait in a good quality atlas or map.

- **This is an area of over 35,000 square kilometres of which only 3% is land. The rest is open shallow sea dotted with coral reefs. There are more than one hundred islands which can be divided into four groups: the eastern islands which are the remnants of volcanoes and which are high islands; the central islands which are low sand cays; a western group of high rocky islands and a north-western group of low mangrove and mud islands.**
- **At approximately what latitude does the Torres Strait lie? How far is this from the equator? At what latitude do you live? How would the climate where you live compare with that of the Torres Strait?**
- **Waiben (Thursday Island) is the administrative centre. What is the closest capital city? What is the closest Australian capital city?**
- **The Torres Strait has been described as the most extensive and ecologically complex continental shelf in the world. Large numbers of dugong, turtles and reef fish can be found and these and other marine resources have always been of major importance to the Torres Strait Islanders. They are the 'salt water people' and their art and culture reflects this.**

The first Europeans to visit the Torres Strait probably came in the sixteenth century.

- **You may have learned something of this in primary school. Who were some of these people and what were the names of their ships? Do some further research to refresh your knowledge.**
- **Who planted a flag on what island in 1770?**
- **What century was that?**
- **What does 'terra nullius' mean?**

The most important collection of Torres Strait Islander art and artefacts is held not in Australia, but in England. This is at the University of Cambridge and was collected by a British scientist called Alfred Haddon who led an expedition to the Torres Strait 100 years ago. A piece from this exhibition is on display at **Ilan Pasin**.



Saibai Island elder and dancemaster Edrick Tabuai with headdress and body decorations





During the visit

You should view the exhibition section by section. The first section deals with traditional works from the time before Europeans (the London Missionary Society in 1871), the second shows the time 'in between' and the third shows emerging works by young contemporary Torres Strait Islander artists.

The dhoeri, dari (dance headdress) is on loan from the University of Cambridge and was collected by the Haddon expedition in 1898. He wanted to record as much as he could of Torres Strait Islander culture.

- **Look at the date that this was made. What does 'c' stand for? What language is this? What does it mean?**
- **What is a colony? Which colony did the Torres Strait belong to? What happened to this colony in 1901?**

Have a look at the hunting charm (sea turtle head).

- **Talk about what you know of the sea turtles that inhabit the warm waters of tropical Australia.**
- **In what ways do you think that the Torres Strait Islanders relied on turtles?**

The warup (drum) also has a timeless appeal with a form that could almost be thought of as modern design.

- **It was made by burning and drilling from each end until the holes met in the middle.**
- **Think of it as a functional object (ie. a musical instrument) but also regard it in the same way that you would as if it were a piece of sculpture.**

Now move on to second or 'in between' section.

This section displays works that were made from 1900 to 1980. During the 1800's there was an increase in contact between Europeans and Torres Strait Islanders. This began to influence local life. The most significant contact came with the arrival of the London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1871. In a little over twenty years the entire Torres Strait was Christian and the original culture fast disappearing. The arrival of the LMS is referred to as the 'Coming of the Light'.

You will see a series of watercolour paintings. These illustrate traditional history and are from a book called 'Myths and Legends of the Torres Strait'.

- **Watercolour is a western medium with a tradition that is mainly British.**
- **What do you think of the idea of an indigenous culture being expressed in the medium of a new and different culture?**
- **Note that the title of the book contains the words 'myths' and 'legends'. What do you think that this says about the attitude of western culture to indigenous culture?**

Look at the spinning top.

- **These were made for competitive play, or to use the western word 'sport' and were taken very seriously.**
- **This one is made from stone and has an etched design. What does 'etched' mean?**
- **Think about how finely balanced this would have to be in order to spin continuously.**

When you go to an art gallery remember not to touch any of the works on display. Finger marks can do damage. Take your time and look at each work of art carefully.



Artist unknown Spinning top
c.1920, acquired 1924 etched stone 45 x 28cm
Queensland Museum



Have a look at the madub (tobacco charm figure). These were planted in the garden as a charm to promote growth. Others were used to encourage sugarcane, bananas and sweet potato.

- How long after the 'Coming of the Light' was this particular charm made?
- What does the fact that it was made after the arrival of Christianity tell you about Torres Strait Islander culture?

The woven mat was acquired in 1914.

- Weaving, basketry and plaiting was done mostly by woman and was the most important art form to Torres Strait Islanders in terms of practical usage.
- Everything from mats to sit on, to containers to hold everything (fish, vegetables, personal items), to sails on canoes were made this way.
- What other uses could you think could be made of woven ware?

Before you move on to the next section where you will find the contemporary pieces have a look at the lugger (dance machine).

- Try to work out what a dance machine is.
- What do you know about luggers?

Of the contemporary works, go first to the whale boat (dance machine)

- Torres Strait Islanders first travelled by outrigger sailing canoe, Europeans introduced the whale boat and then more recently has come the aluminium dinghy with an outboard motor.
- Partly stylized, particularly in the depiction of the figures, this piece evokes so much. It tells a story of history. It is a sculptural piece of charm and as a dance machine it would not be hard to imagine it skimming over the sea.

There are other dance machines as well as dance headdresses and dance masks.

- Charles Warusam's canoe (dance machine) is a beautifully crafted piece. How do you think that the use of different timbers enhances this piece?
- By viewing the dhibal (dance headdress) by Edrick Tabuai and recalling the headdress from 'the time before' collected by the Haddon expedition you can see that there is a continuity of the culture. It was this continuity of culture that Eddie Mabo argued in the High Court of Australia negated the concept of terra nullius. The shape of this headdress has come to symbolise the Torres Strait Island people. Where do you see this symbol?
- The impact of the Second World War (1939-1945) can be seen in the dance headdresses with the American planes on them.
- Edrick Tabuai has another piece, mawa (witch doctor) headdress, which beautifully re-interprets an ancient culture in a contemporary way of expression.
- How do you define these pieces? Are they sculpture or costume or props for drama or do they fall into a unique category all of their own?



Artist unknown Madub (Tobacco charm figure)
c.1920, acquired 1924 wood, paint 64 x 10cm
Queensland Museum



James ESELI Crocodile dance headdress
1986 wood, feathers, aluminium, nails, raffia, paint
95 x 164 x 40.5cm Queensland Museum



In the prints you will see a technical skill resulting from a natural ability to carve allied with a sense of design and pattern. The detail requires your total scrutiny, as the more you look into these prints, the more you see.

- **The traditional stories of the Torres Strait are just beginning to be told in the artwork of these contemporary artists.**
- **Choose a partner and together examine each of the linocut prints.**

Brian Robinson has a painting called 'Ilan Coke'.

- **This painting juxtaposes (to place side by side, especially for comparison or contrast) a traditional form (the drum) with an image derived from western advertising.**
- **Explain the painting.**



Brian ROBINSON *Ilan Coke*
1995 synthetic polymer paint on canvas
121 x 112cm Centre Culturel Jean-Marie Tjibaou,
Nouméa

Look now at three works by Clinton Nain titled 'The Long White Cloud', 'Play Set' and 'White Magic'.

- **In these works you will see elements of collage, construction, painting and sculpture. However the common factor to all three is that they each predominantly present a concept or idea. It is the idea that is the most important. However often the viewer is challenged by a quirky use of media. Work like this is often called conceptual art.**
- **As a group discuss the concept in each.**

Finish looking at the rest of the works in the exhibition and then while you are waiting for the rest of your group sit somewhere quiet and write down what is the single most important thing that you learned from your visit to **Ilan Pasin**. How will you explain this to others?



After The Visit

Your visit to **Ilan Pasin** should have given you a wealth of ideas for your own artworks.

- You could create linocut and silkscreen prints that use images from nature or your own urban environment to inspire designs.
- Make jewellery or bodily adornment pieces using themes such as 'urban tribe' or 'youth culture'.
- Why not make headdresses that are flamboyant, expressive, over the top. Create music and dance to go with them.
- Create images that have a social comment. After your visit what do you think of Eddie Mabo's challenge to the concept of terra nullius?

To follow up on your visit and to broaden your knowledge study the catalogue from the exhibition. You could decide that the culture of the Torres Strait would be your art appreciation topic for the term or semester.



Clinton NAIN *The long white cloud (detail)*
1995-96 installation comprising mixed media
31 x 31 x 20cm 1 of 16 panels Centre Culturel
Jean-Marie Tjibaou, Nouméa





The remote Torres Strait Islands, between Papua New Guinea and the tropical tip of Australia, are home to an indigenous community with a rich history and unique culture.

Ilan Pasin is the first major publication on the art of this fascinating, yet little known culture. It accompanies the first Australian retrospective exhibition on Torres Strait art, which includes pieces not seen in this country for more than a century.

This book provides, for the first time, a Torres Strait Islander perspective on the history, customs, legends and artistic expressions of a people who exist as a minority within the minority of indigenous Australians.

Ilan Pasin reveals the evolution and strength of the somewhat hidden culture of the Torres Strait Islands, presenting artefacts from the nineteenth century alongside works from contemporary artists exploring issues of tradition and identity.

With contributions from both Islanders and non-Islanders, as well as more than 100 colour plates and photographs, this publication is the definitive reference on Torres Strait Islander art.

Featuring essays by

- Tom Mosby, Ephraim Bani, Dr Helen Lawrence,
 The Right Reverend Ted Mosby, Victor McGrath,
 Anita Herle, Maureen Fuary, Mary Bani,
 Anna Eglitis and Ellen José.

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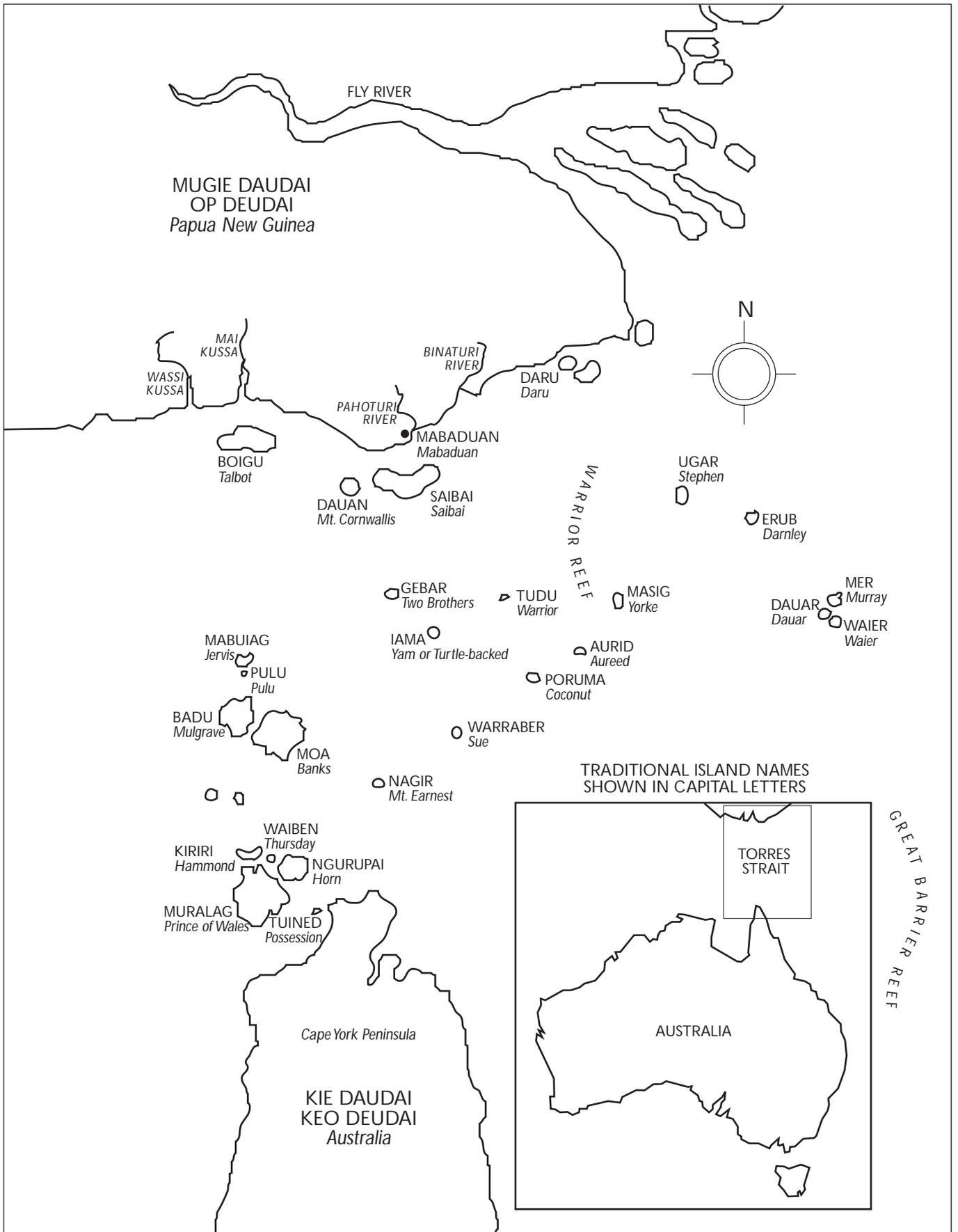
**Ian Potter Museum of Art,
University of Melbourne, Melbourne**
4 November - 5 December 1999

**Tandanya: National Aboriginal Cultural
Institute, Adelaide**
17 December 1999 - 27 February 2000

Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
20 April - 12 June 2000

**Campbelltown City Bicentennial Art
Gallery, Campbelltown**
1 September - 15 October 2000

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This is a simplified map of the Torres Strait. The islands shown here are those with reference in the exhibition and book *Ilan Pasin (this is our way): Torres Strait Art*.

